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ABSTRACT

The effects of an abbreviated vocational evaluation service on client vocational awareness, attitude, and competencies were investigated. Samples for the study were drawn from the 195 clients referred by counselors to the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Office Concentrated Assessment and Diagnosis in Rehabilitation Entrance (CADRE) evaluation unit. Client vocational awareness was estimated from ratings provided by the counselors and the evaluator prior to and after evaluation on the Client Level of Functional Scale. The effects of vocational evaluation on client attitude and competency were estimated in a separate sample pretest/posttest design, career maturity inventory. While previous research on the effects of a two-week vocational evaluation on vocational development of adolescents indicated improvement in vocational attitudes and some evidence of impact on self appraisal, goal selection, and vocational problem solving, the present research did not confirm those findings with the 4.5 day CADRE evaluation. Where previous research with youthful offenders found that they were aware of their vocational goals but were generally at a less than expected level on other dimensions, the present research found that the vast majority of clients were vocationally aware across all five dimensions. (The goal attainment scale for client awareness is appended.) (LRA)

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VOCATIONAL EVALUATION AND CLIENT VOCATIONAL ATTITUDE, COMPETENCY, AND AWARENESS

RESEARCH REPORT

by

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September, 1978

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F.E.M.

ABSTRACT

The effects of an abbreviated vocational evaluation service on client vocational awareness, attitude, and competencies were investigated. One-week evaluations were provided clients at the Waukesha, Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office under an RSA demonstration project: Concentrated Assessment and Diagnosis in Rehabilitation Entrance (CADRE).

Samples for this study were drawn from the 195 clients referred by counselors to the office's CADRE evaluation unit between December 19, 1974 and July 1, 1976. Client vocational awareness (interests, qualifications, goals, services required, and potential) was estimated from ratings provided by the counselors and the evaluator prior to and after evaluation on the Client Level of Functioning Scale, a 5 x 5 matrix of definitions and levels of functioning. The effects of vocational evaluation on client attitude and competency were estimated in a "separate sample pre-test/post-test design," Career Maturity Inventory.

While previous research on the effects of a two-week vocational evaluation on vocational development of adolescents indicated improvement in vocational attitudes and some evidence of impact on self-appraisal, goal selection, and vocational problem solving, the present research did not confirm those findings with the 4.5 day CADRE evaluation. However, where previous research with youthful offenders, found that they were aware of their vocational goals, but were generally at a "less than expected level" on other dimensions, the present research found that the vast majority of clients were vocationally aware across all five dimensions. Finally, while counselors wanted clients to return from evaluation with an awareness of their vocational direction, goal, and some alternative interests (to be able to jointly participate in

rehabilitation planning), clients returned with an awareness of their vocational goal, interests, and of the relationship of their temperaments, aptitudes, and capacities to their job goal.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Improvement of rehabilitation services for the severely disabled is a major priority of the state-federal Vocational Rehabilitation system. In line with this priority are the needs to develop and to evaluate innovative and exemplary approaches for delivery of the rehabilitation system's programs.

Under a Rehabilitation Services Administration expansion grant, the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation installed Concentrated Assessment and Diagnosis in Rehabilitation Entrance (CADRE) as a demonstration project at the regional office in Waukesha, Wisconsin. The project's goal was to demonstrate the advantages of early assessment of the severely disabled in their rehabilitation. Among CADRE's primary demonstration objectives were (1) reduction of evaluation costs; (2) increasing the relevancy of evaluations in counselor-client planning; (3) reduction in the time delay between referral to and onset of evaluations; and (4) more effective utilization of community resources.

Purpose of the Study

The CADRE process included Intake, General Medical Evaluation, Psychological Testing and Evaluation, Vocational Evaluation, Eligibility Determination, Rehabilitation Planning, Implementation of the Rehabilitation Plan, and Closure. In CADRE, though, the first four steps were redesigned to more closely relate them to eligibility determination and to more rapidly bring relevant information for making this decision to the counselor. As such, Psychological Evaluations were regularly conducted in

the Waukesha office and abbreviated Vocational Evaluations were conducted in a unit established at the Waukesha office.

A cooperative effort to study the CADRE project was established between the Regional Rehabilitation Research Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Research and Training Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The main responsibility for assessing the overall long-term and intermediate effects of the CADRE process on client needs and program operation and efficiency was contracted to the Rehabilitation Research Institute.[1] The Research and Training Center's role was to study the immediate effects of the vocational evaluation component on client vocational orientation.

In the evaluation of a two-week vocational evaluation service, adolescents were assessed to determine whether their vocational attitudes and competencies improved as a result of vocational evaluation (Menz, 1978; Mueller and Menz, 1976). In that study, significant inprovement in attitudes toward entry into the world of work occurred, along with general tendencies to improve their abilities to plan entry into the world of work, appraise their vocational and educational capacities, and solve problems related to school and career choice. The first issue which the present study addressed was whether the vocational attitudes and competencies of the more traditional client which CADRE served would be similarily affected by vocational evlauation.

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[1] For specific objectives, design, and findings of that evaluation study, see UW-RRRI (1975) and Wright, et al. (1977).

In an earlier study of the effects of a similar two-week vocational evaluation on youthful offenders, Dunn and Korn (1973) attempted to determine whether vocational evaluation affected client vocational awareness. In that study, they found that clients demonstrated awareness of present vocational goals at the expected level, but over all five goal areas their attainment was consistently at the "less than expected" level. Client awareness was an expectation held by counselors for CADRE clients. The second issue addressed in the present study was whether a similar awareness was obtained by the traditional rehabilitation clients who received CADRE.

CADRE Clients and the Vocational Evaluation Service

The evaluation unit served between 1 and 7 clients per week over a 42 week period. The typical number served each week was between 2 and 4 clients with a rough median client/evaluator ratio of 3:1. Sixty-nine percent of the clients referred for the service were males and 31% females and all were in the service between 1 and 10.5 days. Most typically, the service duration was 4.5 days and very rarely lasted more than 6 days. Eighty percent of those referred to evaluation completed, with 16% dropping out prior to completion, and only 4% reported as not having shown up once the referral contact was established.

During the evaluation, 71% were able to identify at least one job that they had had and liked, with 62% identifying up to 2 jobs, and 9% identifying between 3 and 5 jobs. In all, 64% of them could also state at least one thing about the job which caused them to say that they liked the job. When asked whether there was work which they would have confidence in their ability to do, 24% could not identify any such work, while 18%

could identify 3 or more types of jobs, and another 58% could identify at least one job.

In the previous five years, 43% of the clients had not held jobs, while 45% had held at least one, and 12% had between 2 and 3 different jobs. This high percent of unemployment, however, is partially reflected in the fact that 31% were still in school, 32% had left school before they were 18, and 55% of the group were planning further schooling or training.

Weschler intelligence scores and WRAT reading and arithmetic scores were available for a high proportion of the clients as reported in Table 1. The intellectual functioning of clients served by the project was within the normal range. The average grade levels for the client, however, were quite low. Cognitively, the client had higher functioning than is generally found in vocational evaluation services, but were functionally ill-prepared in literacy and computational skills.

Table 1: Cognitive Ability of CADRE Clients

MEASURE	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Weschler			
Verbal	139	94.23	14.13
Performance	136	95.60	13.74
Full Scale	136	94.43	13.44
Wide Range Achievement Test			
Reading	140	9.50	3.96
Spelling	79	7.93	3.47
Arithmetic	143	6.86	2.45

The general evaluation included combinations of aptitude, interest, and personality inventories, and various combinations of the 16 Singer evaluation units based upon the evaluator's decision. These aptitude, interest, and evaluation work samples are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Measures and Work Samples Used in CADRE

ABILITIES TESTS	PERSONAL/NEED INVENTORY
WRAT (Reading, Spelling, Arithmetic)	Kuder-Personal
Basic Skills (Arithmetic)	Minnesota Importance Questionnaire
APTITUDE TESTS	Career Awareness
GATB	SINGER WORK SAMPLES
Graves Design Judgement	Basic Tools
Minnesota Paper Form Board	Sample Making
Bennett Mechanical	Bench Assembly
Bennett Hand Tool	Drafting
Purdue Peg Board	Electricity
Differential Aptitude Test (Clerical, Spelling, Accounting)	Plumbing
Short Test of Clerical Skills	Carpentry
SRA Typing	Refrigeration
Steno Aptitude	Welding
INTEREST INVENTORIES	Office and Sales
Kuder-Vocational	Needle Trades
Minnesota Vocational Interest	Sheet Metal
Strong Vocational Interest	Cooking
Occupational Interest Inventory	Small Engines
Milwaukee Academic Interest	Medical Technology
Singer Interest	Cosmetology
Picture Interest Inventory	

II. METHOD

Samples

The samples for this study were drawn from the 195 clients entering the Waukesha office between December 19, 1974 and July 1, 1976 and referred by counselors to the office's vocational evaluation unit. No attempt was made to structure the referral process. Ratings of clients were provided voluntarily by counselors. Clients voluntarily participated in the assessment of attitudes and competencies and only clients able to complete the instruments were included.

Dependent Variables and Instruments

Vocational Attitudes and Competencies. Vocational attitude is a unitary concept defined as an attitude toward making a career choice and entering or venturing into the world of work. Vocational competency consists of five separate types of abilities which Crites (1969) has found important in vocational decision-making:

1. Ability to appraise one's vocational assets and liabilities,
2. Ability to utilize occupational information,
3. Ability to select a vocational goal,
4. Ability to plan entry into a career area,
5. Ability to solve problems related to entry into a career area.

Vocational attitude and vocational competency were assessed with the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI). Testing time to complete all parts of this instrument is approximately 120 minutes and the reading level has been determined to be at below the 5th grade level.

Vocational Awareness. Vocational awareness refers to knowledges a person has of himself and the world of work which are considered an important part of the decision-making process. Client vocational awareness consists of five dimensions (Dunn and Korn, 1973). On each of these five dimensions, the client can be rated between being almost totally unaware/unknowledgeable to being fully aware/knowledgeable about himself or his needs:

1. Awareness of vocational interests,
2. Awareness of vocational qualifications,
3. Awareness of vocational goals,
4. Awareness of services required,
5. Awareness of vocational potential.

Vocational awareness was estimated from ratings provided by the counselors and the evaluator using the Client Level of Functioning Scale (see Appendix). The scale is a 5 x 5 matrix of definitions and levels of functioning. For each area of vocational awareness, five levels of client functioning are defined. For instance, on awareness of vocational interest, the lowest level of functioning is defined as "unable to state any vocational interests or refers to social activities only," whereas the highest level is defined as "able to state two or more vocational interests, compatible with those identified by evaluator, and indicate order of Importance." The awareness areas can also be assigned relative importance and levels of functioning subsequent to vocational evaluation within particular areas can be differentially measured.

Procedures

The effects of vocational evaluation on client attitude and competency

were estimated in a "separate sample pre-test/post-test design." Clients referred to the office-based CADRE unit were randomly assigned to either a pre-test or a post-test condition. Each client completed 3 of the 6 CMI scales on either the first or the last day of vocational evaluation. Assessment was limited as such to minimize interference with the evaluation service.

At referral to vocational evaluation, counselors ranked each awareness area in terms of its relative importance as an effect of vocational evaluation for the client. Immediately after the counselor's first contact with the client following CADRE vocational evaluation and prior to receiving the evaluation report, the counselor rated the client's functioning in each awareness area. The office-based evaluator also independently estimated the client's level of functioning in each area at the end of evaluation.

III. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Vocational Attitude and Competency

Pretest and posttest client scores on the CMI were contrasted to determine whether there were improvements in attitude and competency, as had been previously found by Menz (1978). The findings, with respect to expected changes in attitude and competency, are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Change in Vocational Attitudes and Competencies

ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES AND CORRESPONDING CMI SCALES	EVALUATION STAGE				RESULTS		
	PRE		POST				
	N	Mean S.D.	N	Mean S.D.	Mean Change	F	P
Vocational Attitude (Attitude Scale)	23	32.91 4.53	22	34.09 5.21	1.18	.66	.422
Appraise Vocational Assets and Liabilities (Knowing Yourself)	28	13.93 4.04	27	12.26 4.23	-1.67	2.24	.140
Utilize Occupational Information (Knowing About Jobs)	30	15.53 4.23	32	15.87 3.62	.34	.12	.733
Select a Vocational Goal (Choosing a Job)	27	12.11 4.17	26	12.65 3.78	.54	.25	.622
Plan Entry into a Career/Area (Looking Ahead)	22	11.59 4.67	21	12.67 4.19	1.08	.63	.432
Solve Problems Related to Entry (What Should They Do)	20	11.95 3.98	17	10.88 2.85	-1.07	.85	.363

No significant differences were found on any of the CMI scales. While the CADRE evaluation was essentially an abbreviated form of the evaluation which adolescents had received in the process studied by Menz, changes were

not of the magnitude previously found. A short screening type evaluation (4.5 days) does not produce significant changes in client vocational attitude and competency.

Vocational Awareness

The priorities which counselors had for their clients' vocational awareness when referring clients to CADRE and the percents of clients who were vocationally aware on each after evaluation are reported in Table 4. Evaluation priorities were estimated by ranking each awareness dimension on the basis of the proportion of clients referred to CADRE for whom the awareness dimension was highest or second highest as an effect desired by the counselor. The percents of clients aware are based on counselor and evaluator post-evaluation ratings of client levels of awareness. The percents estimate the proportion of clients who were rated adequately or more than adequately aware/knowledgeable (scale values of 3, 2, and 1) on each dimension.

Table 4. Counselor Evaluation Priorities and Client Vocational Awareness after Evaluation

CLIENT AWARENESS OF...	EVALUATION PRIORITY	PERCENTS CLIENTS AWARE	
		Counselors	Evaluator
Vocational Potential	1	56.86	61.54
Vocational Interests	2.5	61.76	77.61
Vocational Goals	2.5	77.45	66.15
Vocational Qualifications	4	62.75	77.61
Services Required	5	41.18	55.38
ACROSS DIMENSIONS		60.16	67.65

When counselors referred clients to vocational evaluation (CADRE), they wanted their client to return from evaluation able to estimate a future level of vocational functioning and the steps that would need to be taken to reach that level (Vocational Potential) and to be able to identify both general vocational interests and a specific job goal. They did not have as high expectations that clients would return from evaluation with either an adequate awareness of the rehabilitation services that they would need to obtain their vocational goal (Services Required) or be able to relate their aptitudes, temperaments, and capacities to their vocational goal (Vocational Qualifications). The counselors wanted their clients to return from evaluation with an awareness of their vocational direction, goal, and some alternative goals. In other words, by the completion of evaluation, counselors wanted the client prepared to jointly participate with the counselor in establishing a rehabilitation service plan which adequately accounted for the known interests and aspirations of the client.

At the conclusion of evaluation, the majority of clients were judged vocationally aware by both counselors and the evaluator, with the evaluator consistently judging a slightly higher proportion of clients adequately aware on all dimensions (Table 4). Both counselors and the evaluator saw clients returning from evaluation sufficiently aware of their vocational goal and interests to participate in their rehabilitation. Neither the counselor nor the evaluator saw the client as aware enough of the rehabilitation services they would require to independently plan their rehabilitation. Finally, while counselors would prefer clients to have a goal, some alternative interests, and some level of aspiration with respect to their job goal to effectively participate in rehabilitation planning, instead, clients bring

to rehabilitation planning a relatively adequate awareness of their vocational goal, of some alternative interests, and of the relationship between their qualifications and their goal.

Conclusions

The effects of a short-term vocational evaluation process on the vocational attitudes, competencies, and vocational awareness of rehabilitation clients are reported. These findings were discussed in relation to effects previously found with adolescent groups who received a similar but longer term of vocational evaluation. The following conclusions were derived:

1. Previous research on the effects of vocational evaluation on vocational development (Menz and Mueller, 1976) indicate improvement in vocational attitudes following evaluation and some evidence of impact on self-appraisal, goal selection, and vocational problem solving. The present research did not confirm those findings. While a two-week evaluation has impact on vocational development, a 4.5 day evaluation does not.

2. Previous research on the effects of vocational evaluation on vocational awareness (Dunn and Korn, 1973) found that youthful offenders were aware of their vocational goals, but over all five dimensions of vocational awareness, they were at a "less than expected level." In contrast to those findings, the present research found that the vast majority of clients were vocationally aware across the five dimensions.

3. Counselors want clients to return from evaluation with an awareness of their vocational direction (Aspiration), goal and some alternative interests to be able to jointly participate in rehabilitation planning.

4. Clients returned from evaluation with an awareness of their vocational goal, interests, and of the relationship of their temperaments, aptitudes, and capacities to their job goal. Vocational direction (Aspiration) is not at as high a level among client awareness dimensions as hoped by the counselor. Clients returned from evaluation least aware of the services that would be required to attain their goal.

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APPENDIX

Goal Attainment Scale for Client Awareness

Level of predicted success / Goals	1. Awareness of vocational interests.	2. Awareness of vocational qualifications.	3. Awareness of vocational goal.
most unfavorable outcome thought likely	Client unable to state any vocational interests or refers to social activities only.	Client is unable to state more than one significant vocational qualification and/or relate qualification to identified WTGA.	Client is unable to state any specific job goal *or* states job goal identified by evaluator and indicates that he rejects this as a goal.
less than expected success	Client states vocational interests only in specific, job related terms (e.g. truck driver).		Client is able to state job goal, but one other than that identified by evaluator.
expected level of success	Client is able to state a general vocational interest compatible with the OGA identified by the evaluator.	Client is able to state his significant vocational qualifications (aptitudes, temperaments, capacities) as related to the WTGA identified by the evaluator.	Client is able to state the job goal identified by the evaluator and to indicate it is a job in which he is interested and has the qualifications to succeed.
more than expected success			
most favorable outcome thought likely	Client is able to state two or more general vocational interests, compatible with those identified by evaluator, and indicate order of importance.	Client is able to state all significant vocational qualifications identified by evaluator and to relate these to successful performance in two or more WTGA's identified by evaluator.	Client is able to state the job goals identified by the evaluator, state his interests and qualifications in relation to each, and select (or rank order) jobs in order of preference.

Level of predicted success / Goals	4. Awareness of Services Required	5. Awareness of vocational potential.
most unfavorable outcome thought likely	Client states that he is able to attain goal without services even though these are needed *or* unable to state any services needed.	
less than expected success	Client able to state some but not all of the services required to enable him to attain identified vocational goal.	Client is able to state a future vocational goal (not necessarily that identified by evaluator) but unable to describe services needed to attain the future goal.
expected level of success	Client is able to state all the services necessary to enable him to attain his identified vocational goal.	Client is able to state his potential level of vocational functioning and to state services necessary for him to attain the potential level, as indicated by the evaluator.
more than expected success		
most favorable outcome thought likely	Client is able to state services necessary to enable him to attain his immediate vocational goal, the purpose of the services and to indicate his willingness to cooperate with provision of all services.	Client is able to state a future vocational goal, a reasonable method for attaining the future goal, and to indicate willingness to direct his activities toward attainment of goal.

From Dunn and Korn, 1973, pp 32-33.